



## Side – Sanae

One holiday, Sanae was watching through the anime she'd recorded. She was watching with Koutarou because watching anime alone was boring, so she'd waited until a day that Koutarou was there.

"How many's left?"

"Let's see, four I think."

"Four of what?"

"They're all of Hundred Ninja."

Sanae liked many anime, and hero shows were one among them. Incidentally, Koutarou also had an understanding with them, so her waiting until they could watch them together wasn't just having fun together, but also thinking of Koutarou's hobbies.

"Ah, those ninja that cluster together."

"Bringing together a faction is a hero's right."

"There's a limit to that though."

"Strength in numbers!"

"And what'll happen to justice if you bulldoze it with numbers."

"It's democratic, right?"

"I think it's more like anarchy."

They watched the anime as they chatted inconsequentially. Sanae often concentrated too much on the conversation and missed what was going on, but she didn't rewind it, she really wanted to talk and the anime was just a tool to do so.

"But... maybe it's right for ninja to do that."

“Eh, really?”

“Apparently real ninja would fight as large groups. So it’s like they’re swarming.”

“So it’s all those five-member teams that are strange?”

“Strictly speaking I suppose so. Well, that kind of thing probably happens too.”

“Eeehh, interesting.”

Sanae went back to watching the TV as she chewed on rice crackers. On screen it was just as Koutarou had said, large numbers of ninja attacked yokai. And even the largest yokai were quickly dispatched and the attack was over in an instant.

“Hmmm, a swarm attack huh... ehe.”

Sanae threw the remains of her rice cracker into her mouth and smiled as if she’d thought of something. Then, she put her hands together in front of her chest and loudly proclaimed.

“Ninja Art: Clone Technique!”

Sanae let out a burst of spiritual energy that made something like smoke, and when that smoke cleared, Sanae had split into three.

“This is my Secret Ninja Art, Clone Technique!”

“Sanae-chan, how did you do this!?”

“Au, au aua.”

The three were unmistakably Sanae. First, Sanae-chan, full of confidence, then Sanae-san who was bewildered at the turn of events, and finally a husk with a partial soul that had slipped out between them.

“Oi, Sanae, is this going to be alright?”

Koutarou worriedly nudged the clone. Compared to the other two, there was clearly something wrong. It didn’t move like a human, but closer to a zombie. The clone let out a weird voice when she was poked and swayed.

“Au au, au.”

“It’ll be fine, probably.”

“Don’t do that kind of thing with a ‘probably’, Sanae-chan!”

“It’s fine, it’s not like we’re completely separated.”

“Well, that’s true.”

The first two were made up of roughly ninety percent of her original spiritual body. The remaining ten percent gathered in her body and moved it. And as always, their soul was still connected to the body. Whether being zombie-like was a correct way for a girl to present herself, they didn’t need to worry about being separated.

“So, what do we do now?”

“Nfufu, a swarm attack ♪ Get him!”

“Au au auua.”

“Eehh!? Eeehh!?... U-umm... Eeeei!!”

At her order, Sanae-chan and her body leapt at Koutarou. Sanae-san was confused but finally made up her mind and joined the two.

“W-what’re you doing!?”

“Take the strength of numbers!”

“I’m sorry!”

“Au, auua.”

Finally the three Sanae ignored the anime and began playing with Koutarou. In the end, Sanae was happiest when playing with someone.



## **Higashihongan Sanae**

*She was originally a ghost bound to Corona House room 106. After combining with the personality left in her body, Sanae-san, she became a physical, energetic girl with many expressions.*